

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) A system for providing service to customers in a business establishment, the system comprising:
 - a plurality of service locations physically located in a business establishment, each service location including a communication device adapted to communicate one or more events pertaining to a service event for a customer who is physically located at the service location in the business establishment,
wherein the service locations comprise gaming machines, and the communication devices of the gaming machines are adapted to communicate game events to a gaming machine management system;
 - a decisioning system communicatively coupled to the communication devices to receive the events, the decisioning system configured to schedule a primary service attendant from a plurality of service attendants for servicing each event according to at least a value of the customer at the service location that generated the event, wherein the value of the customer comprises a dynamic theoretical win profile that is based at least in part on an estimate of the business establishment's expected revenue per time period based on the customer's historical gaming activity;
 - a communication system communicatively coupled to the decisioning system to transmit a message to the primary service attendant selected for an event, the message indicating a physical location in the business establishment, corresponding to the service location at which the event is to be serviced and to which the primary service attendant is to travel to service the service event;
and
 - a plurality of message receivers for use by the service attendants, including the primary service attendant, each message receiver configured to receive messages from the communication system and display the received messages to a service attendant.

2-3. (Canceled)

4. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein the customer value is based on a room rate of a room occupied by the customer.

5. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein the customer value is based on a room type of a room occupied by the customer.

6. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein the customer value is based on a number of persons in a party associated with the customer.

7. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein the decisioning system uses a plurality of rules for scheduling the events for service.

8. (Original) The system of claim 7, wherein the rules include:
at least one rule for scheduling events according to an age of the event.

9. (Original) The system of claim 7, wherein the rules include:
at least one rule for scheduling events according to a type of event.

10. (Original) The system of 7, wherein the rules include:
at least one rule for scheduling events according to a location of the service location.

11. (Original) The system of claim 7, wherein the rules include:
at least one rule for scheduling events according to a combination of an age of the event and a value of the customer.

12. (Original) The system of claim 7, wherein the rules include:
at least one rule for selecting a service attendant for servicing an event based on a location of the service location which generated the event and an assigned location of the service attendant.

13. (Original) The system of claim 7, wherein the rules include:

at least one rule for messaging a supervisor of the primary service attendant if the primary service attendant has not completed servicing the event in a certain amount of time.

14. (Original) The system of 7, wherein the rules include:

at least one rule for scheduling events according to an age of the event;

at least one rule for scheduling events according to a type of event;

at least one rule for scheduling events according to a location of the service location;
and

at least one rule for selecting a service attendant for servicing an event based on a location of the service location which generated the event and an assigned location of the service attendant.

15. (Canceled)

16. (Currently amended) The system of claim 1 [[15]], wherein the gaming machines are slot machines, and the communication devices are interface boards that communicate slot events to the gaming machine management system.

17. (Previously presented) The system of claim 1, wherein the communication system is a two-way messaging system, whereby the message receivers can transmit and receive messages.

18. (Original) The system of claim 17, wherein:

the primary service attendant can accept or decline to service an event using the two-way message receiver, and wherein:

in response to the primary service attendant declining to service an event, the decisioning system selects a secondary service attendant for servicing the event, and the messaging system transmits a message to the secondary service attendant to service the event.

19. (Original) The system of claim 17, wherein:

the primary service attendant can accept or decline to service an event using the two-way message receiver, and wherein:

in response to the primary service attendant accepting to service an event, the decisioning system establishes the primary service attendant as being unavailable to service another event until the primary service provider completes service of the accepted event.

20. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein the decisioning system monitors the time taken to service each event, and responsive to time taken to service an event exceeding a threshold amount, the decisioning system selects an employee to notify of the incomplete service, and instructs the messaging system to transmit a message to the selected employee.

21. (Original) The system of claim 1, further comprising:

a customer database, communicatively coupled to the decisioning system and containing customer records indicating for each customer a measure of the customer's value and the customer's identification number, the decisioning system receiving from a service location a customer identification number and querying the customer database with the received customer identification number to obtain the measure of the customer's value, the decisioning system scheduling the event for service according to the obtained customer value.

22. (Original) The system of claim 21, wherein each service location includes a customer identification card reader, for reading a customer identification number from a customer identification card.

23. (Currently amended) A system for providing service to customers in a business establishment, the system comprising:

at each of a plurality of service locations physically located in a business establishment, a communication means for communicating one or more events pertaining to a service event for a customer who is physically located at the service location in the business establishment, wherein the service locations

comprise gaming machines, and the communication means is adapted to communicate game events to a gaming machine management system;

a computer implemented decision making means communicatively coupled to the plurality of communication means for receiving the events, the decision making means for selecting a primary service attendant from a plurality of service attendants for servicing each event according to at least a value of a customer to be serviced for each event, wherein the value of a customer comprises a dynamic theoretical win profile that is based at least in part on an estimate of the business establishment's expected revenue per time period based on the customer's historical gaming activity;

a messaging means communicatively coupled to the decision making means for transmitting a message to the primary service attendant selected for servicing an event, the message indicating a physical location in the business establishment, corresponding to the service location to which the selected primary service attendant is to travel to service at which the event is to be serviced; and

a plurality of message receiving means for use by the service attendants, including the primary service attendant, each message receiving means for receiving messages from the messaging means and for displaying the received messages to a service attendant.

24-25. (Canceled)

26. (Original) The system of claim 23, wherein the customer value is based on a room rate of a room occupied by the customer.

27. (Original) The system of claim 23, wherein the customer value is based on a room type of a room occupied by the customer.

28. (Original) The system of claim 23, wherein the customer value is based on a number of persons in a party associated with the customer.

29. (Original) The system of claim 23, wherein the decision making means includes a plurality of rules for scheduling the events for service.

30. (Original) The system of claim 29, wherein the rules of the decision making means for scheduling events include:

at least one rule for scheduling events according to an age of the event.

31. (Original) The system of claim 29, wherein the rules of the decision making means for scheduling events include:

at least one rule for scheduling events according to a type of event.

32. (Original) The system of claim 29, wherein the rules of the decision making means for scheduling events include:

at least one rule for scheduling events according to a location of the service location.

33. (Original) The system of claim 29, wherein the rules of the decision making means for scheduling events include:

at least one rule for scheduling events according to a combination of an age of the event and the value of the customer.

34. (Original) The system of claim 29, wherein the rules of the decision making means for scheduling events include:

at least one rule for selecting a service attendant for servicing an event based on a location of the service location which generated the event and an assigned location of the service attendant.

35. (Original) The system of claim 29, wherein the rules of the decision making means for scheduling events include:

at least one rule for messaging a supervisor of the primary service attendant if the primary service attendant has not completed servicing the event in a certain amount of time.

36. (Original) The system of claim 29, wherein the rules of the decision making means for scheduling events include:

at least one rule for scheduling events according to an age of the event;
at least one rule for scheduling events according to a type of event;
at least one rule for scheduling events according to a location of the service location;
and
at least one rule for selecting a service attendant for servicing an event based on a location of the service location which generated the event and an assigned location of the service attendant.

37. (Canceled)

38. (Currently amended) The system of claim 23 [[37]], wherein the gaming machines are slot machines, and the communication devices are interface boards that communicate slot events to the gaming machine management system.

39. (Original) The system of claim 23, wherein the messaging means is a two-way paging system and the message receiving means are two-way pagers.

40. (Original) The system of claim 39, wherein:

the primary service attendant can accept or decline to service an event using the two-way message receiver, and wherein:
in response to the primary service attendant declining to service an event, the decision making means selects a secondary service attendant for servicing the event, and the messaging system transmits a message to the secondary service attendant to service the event.

41. (Original) The system of claim 39, wherein:

the primary service attendant can accept or decline to service an event using the two-way message receiver, and wherein:
in response to the primary service attendant accepting to service an event, the decision making means establishes the primary service attendant as being

unavailable to service another event until the primary service provider completes service of the accepted event.

42. (Original) The system of claim 23, wherein the decision making means monitors the time taken to service each event, and responsive to time taken to service an event exceeding a threshold amount, the decision making means selects an employee to notify of the incomplete service, and instructs the messaging system to transmit a message to the selected employee.

43. (Original) The system of claim 23, further comprising:

a customer database, communicatively coupled to the decision making means and containing customer records indicating for each customer a measure of the customer's value and the customer's identification number, the decision making means receiving from a service location a customer identification number and querying the customer database with the received customer identification number to obtain the measure of the customer's value, the decision making means scheduling the event for service according to the obtained customer value.

44. (Original) The system of claim 43, wherein each service location includes a customer identification card reader, for reading a customer identification number from a customer identification card.

45. (Currently amended) A system for servicing customers in a business establishment, the system comprising:

a plurality of service locations physically located in a business establishment, each service location including a means for transmitting from the service location a message pertaining to an event at the service location and for which a customer who is physically located at the service location in the business establishment needs service by a service attendant, wherein the service locations comprise gaming machines, and the means for transmitting is adapted to communicate game events to a gaming machine management system;

means for receiving the transmitted message;
means, communicatively coupled to the receiving means, for scheduling the event according to at least the value of the customer, wherein the value of the customer comprises a dynamic theoretical win profile that is based at least in part on an estimate of the business establishment's expected revenue per time period based on the customer's historical gaming activity;
means for selecting a first service attendant for servicing the scheduled event; and
means for transmitting a message to the first service attendant identifying a physical location in the business establishment, corresponding to the service location to which the first primary service attendant is to travel to service to be serviced for the event.

46. (Currently amended) A method of servicing customers in a business establishment, the method comprising:

at a service location physically located in a business establishment, identifying an event at the service location for which a customer who is physically located at the service location in the business establishment needs service by a service attendant, wherein the service location comprises a gaming machine;
transmitting from a communication device at the service location to a gaming machine management system a message pertaining to the identified event at the service location;
receiving the transmitted message;
scheduling the event for servicing by a first service attendant according to at least a value of the customer at the service location that generated the event, wherein the value of the customer comprises a dynamic theoretical win profile that is based at least in part on an estimate of the business establishment's expected revenue per time period based on the customer's historical gaming activity;
transmitting a message to the first service attendant identifying a physical location in the business establishment, which corresponds to the service location to be serviced for the event; and

dispatching the first service attendant to travel to the service location and service the event.

47. (Original) The method of claim 46, further comprising:
 - receiving from a customer at a service location data identifying the customer, wherein transmitted message includes the data identifying at least one of a the customer or the service location; and
 - scheduling the event for servicing by a first service attendant according to at least a value of the customer at the service location comprises determining from the identifying data the value of the customer.
48. (Original) The method of claim 46, wherein the service locations are hotel rooms.
49. (Original) The method of claim 46, wherein the service locations are cruise ship cabins.
50. (Original) The method of claim 46, wherein the service locations are amusement park facilities.
51. (Original) The method of claim 46, wherein the service locations are restaurant tables.
52. (Original) The method of claim 46, further comprising:
 - receiving from the first service attendant a message declining to service an event;
 - selecting a second service attendant to service the event; and
 - transmitting a message to the second service attendant to service the event.
53. (Original) The method of claim 46, wherein:
 - receiving from the first service attendant a message accepting to service an event; and
 - establishing the first service attendant as being unavailable to service another event until the first service provider completes service of the accepted event.

54. (Original) The method of claim 53, wherein the message from the first service attendant is transmitted from a communication device fixed at the service location.

55. (Original) The method of claim 46, further comprising:
monitoring the time taken to service the event; and
responsive to the time taken to service an event exceeding a threshold amount,
transmitting a message to another employee to notify of the incomplete service.

56. (Original) The method of claim 46, further comprising:
monitoring an aggregate performance criteria for servicing the events; and
responsive the aggregate performance criteria exceeding a threshold amount,
transmitting a message to supervisor.

57. (Original) The method of claim 46, further comprising:
responsive to not receiving, within a predetermined amount of time, an acceptance from the first service attendant of the message to service the event,
transmitting a message to a second service attendant to service the event.

58. (Original) The method of claim 46, wherein scheduling the event for servicing further comprises:

scheduling the event for servicing using a plurality of rules.

59. (Original) The method of claim 46, wherein scheduling the event for servicing further comprises:

scheduling the event for servicing according to an age of the event.

60. (Original) The method of claim 46, wherein scheduling the event for servicing further comprises:

scheduling the event for servicing according to a type of event.

61-62. (Canceled)

63. (Original) The method of claim 46, wherein the customer value is based on a room rate of a room occupied by the customer.

64. (Original) The method of claim 46, wherein the customer value is based on a room type of a room occupied by the customer.

65. (Original) The method of claim 46, wherein the customer value is based on a number of persons in a party associated with the customer.

66. (Original) The method of claim 46, wherein scheduling the event for servicing further comprises:

scheduling the event for servicing according to a location of the service location.

67. (Original) The method of claim 46, wherein scheduling the event for servicing further comprises:

scheduling the event for servicing according to a combination of an age of the event
and a value of the customer.

68. (Original) The method of claim 46, wherein scheduling the event for servicing further comprises:

selecting a service attendant for servicing an event based on a location of the service
location which generated the event and an assigned location of the service
attendant.

69. (Previously presented) The method of claim 46, wherein scheduling the event for servicing further comprises:

messaging a supervisor of the first service attendant if the first service attendant has
not completed servicing the event in a certain amount of time.

70. (Original) The method of claim 46, wherein scheduling the event for servicing further comprises:

scheduling the event for servicing according to, an age of the event, a type of event, a location of the service location; and
selecting a service attendant for servicing an event based on a location of the service location which generated the event and an assigned location of the service attendant.

71. (Original) The method of claim 46, further comprising:
receiving from the service location a customer identification number;
querying a customer database with the received customer identification number to obtain the measure of the customer's value; and
scheduling the event for service according to the obtained customer value.

72. (Original) The method of claim 46, wherein each service location includes a customer identification card reader, for reading a customer identification number from a customer identification card.

73. (Original) The method of claim 46, wherein scheduling the event further comprises scheduling the event using scheduling rules pertaining to an amount of time an event has been pending, an evaluation of the customer's value, and a type of the event.

74. (Currently amended) The method of claim 46, wherein the ~~service locations are gaming machines, and the service location events include~~ event is a jackpot at a gaming machine.

75. (Currently amended) A system for providing service to customers in a business establishment, the system comprising:

a plurality of service locations physically located in a business establishment, each service location including a communication device adapted to communicate one or more events pertaining to a service event for a customer who is physically located at the service location in the business establishment,
wherein the service locations comprise gaming machines, and the

communication devices of the gaming machines are adapted to communicate game events to a gaming machine management system;

a decisioning system for scheduling the events for service, by receiving the events from the communication devices and using a plurality of rules to select a primary service attendant for servicing each event including at least one rule to schedule an event based on a value of the customer, to produce a periodically updated event service schedule, wherein the value of the customer comprises a dynamic theoretical win profile that is based at least in part on an estimate of the business establishment's expected revenue per time period based on the customer's historical gaming activity;

a communication system for transmitting a message to the primary service attendant selected for an event, by way of a two-way communication network, to produce a message indicating to the primary service attendant a physical location in the business establishment, corresponding to the service location to which the primary service attendant is to travel to service at which the event is to be serviced; and

a plurality of message receivers for receiving the messages from the communication system transmitted to the service attendants, by way of the two-way communication network, to produce to the service attendant a message.